IBIS Community Forums and Blogs
Quick Start Guide

Introduction

We have implemented blogs and forums to assist in communication for IBIS. Anyone with a web browser can read anything here. However, if you wish to make comments or post entries to a forum or see certain other information, you will need to join.

In case you haven't heard, a blog, or web log, is a series of regular entries on a web page. Blog postings are usually written in an informal, conversational style by one or more individuals. A blog usually focuses on one area of interest and the IBIS blogs focus on different aspects of IBIS. Anyone can read anything on the blogs. But for now, only members of the IBIS team can post to the blogs. Anyone who has joined can reply or comment on any entry.

A forum is a facility for holding discussions among a large number of people. Sometimes these are known as message boards, discussion groups, or bulletin boards (if you've been around for a while). We plan to use the forum for timely and convenient discussions of issues related to IBIS. We expect that traffic on the forums will increase as implementation gets closer and will peak when implementation day arrives. We plan to devote considerable resources to making IBIS implementation as smooth as is humanly possible, but we all know that there will be rough spots. The forums, we hope, will help us get through these. We encourage people to begin using the forums early so that we'll have sufficient experience to use them efficiently when things heat up. Anyone can read the forum postings, but you need to join in order to do your own posting.

There are many more features and functions in the software than are covered by this Quick Start Guide. Feel free to explore. The software won't let you do any real damage. It takes a few minutes (about 10) for postings to appear.

To get to the IBIS Community Home page, go to the IBIS Website: http://ibis.wi.gov/ and click the "Quick Link" to the "IBIS Blogs & Forums" on the right-hand side of the screen.

Please read the "Services Agreement", which is Appendix 1 at the end of this guide.

A note about navigation: Navigation links are usually near the upper-right corner of a screen. Different screens display navigation links in different places or with a different appearance. Sometimes, there are more than one set of navigation links on a page. Just click the option you want, wherever it appears.

Joining / Registering

Joining or registering for the IBIS Community is self-service.

If you do not have an ID/Password, click the "Join" link near the top of the home page, on the right.

You will see the "Join this community" screen.

1. Type in your alias name - this can be your real name, a nickname, or a "handle". Whenever you sign in, this name will be your user name.
2. Type your password (twice)
3. Type your e-mail address (twice). If you ever forget your password, your new password will be sent to this e-mail address. This address must be unique; you will not be allowed to proceed if the e-mail address you type is already in use.
   Since the IBIS Community is for your work on the IBIS Project, you should use your work e-mail address.
4. Be sure to check the box: "I accept the services agreement". The services agreement is in Appendix 1 at the end of this guide.
5. Click the "Create User" button in the lower right corner.
6. Your user account is created and you are signed in.

Updating your profile

To update your own profile:

1. Sign in
2. Click your sign-in name near the upper right corner.

3. The system displays your profile screen.
4. Type the changes you need.
5. Click the "Save Changes" button at the bottom of the screen.

Note: you can use an "avatar". An avatar is an image you select or create to represent yourself in the IBIS Community pages. It is usually a caricature, not a realistic photo and can be a simple image or a bizarre fantasy figure. Your avatar should be 80x80 pixels or smaller.

NOTE!: Be sure your time zone is set to: (GMT -06:00) Central Time (US & Canada).
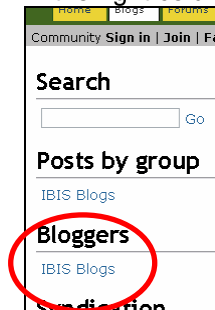
Blogs

For now, only members of the IBIS Team can write blogs. To read and comment on the IBIS Blogs, click the "Blogs" tab at the top of the page.
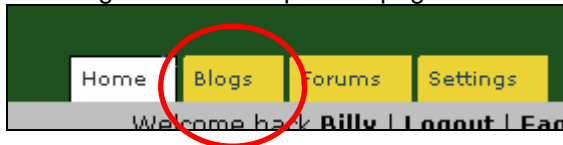
The system will display a screen containing the most recent posts on the left and the index in the right column.
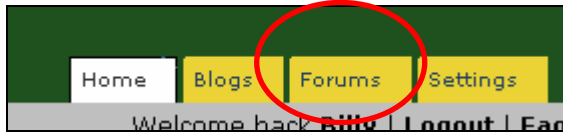
In the right column, click the link, "IBIS Blogs", under "Bloggers"

The system will display the list of blogs. Click the name of the blog you wish to read.

Forums

To post messages to an IBIS Forum, you must sign-in first. To read messages on an IBIS Forum, click the "Forums" tab at the top of the page:

The system will display a screen containing the IBIS Forums.

There are several levels here. The highest level is a "**Forum Group**". A Forum Group includes "**Forums**". Forums include "**Threads**" (or topics). Threads include "**Posts**", which are the items that community members leave for others to read and comment on. After you use the forums for a while, this should become clear.

To read the contents, click the forum name. This page also includes a listing of the most recent posting and counts of threads and posts.

After you click the forum name, the system displays the listing of topics within the forum.

Click on a topic name to read the posts - this is the heart of the forums.

If you are signed-in, you can "reply" or reply with a "quote" of the post. You can also delete and edit your own posts, but not those of other members.

Miscellaneous

Private Messages

To send a private message on the IBIS forums:

1. You must be signed-in as a user; if you are not signed-in, you won't be able to send a private message.
2. In the original post, click the "PM" icon at the bottom of the post:

3. The system displays a blank message screen; the message will be addressed to the poster of the original post.
4. Type your message and click the "Post" button at the bottom.
5. After a few seconds, both sender and receiver of the private message will be able to view it.

6. On the forum home page, click the "Private Messages" link at the top (circled above).
7. The system displays a list of the Private Messages you have sent and received.
8. Click the message title to read the message.

Logging Out

To log out, you generally must return to the home page. Then click "Logout" near the upper right corner.

Need Help?

If you need help, click the FAQ link near the top right corner of the screen.
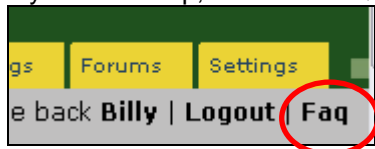
That's about all we can do for you. There is no help desk or tech support for the forums or blogs. Good luck.

(You could send an e-mail to DOAIBIS@wisconsin.gov   Someone should get back to you. No promises.)

Appendix 1 - IBIS Community - Services Agreement

February 28, 2006

By joining the IBIS Community, you agree to follow the guidelines contained in this Service Agreement when working with the IBIS blogs and forums.

1. **Be responsible**
   You are personally responsible for what you say. Your words will be posted for the world to see and they will stay posted for a long time.

2. **Be respectful**
   Don't use ethnic slurs, personal insults, obscenity, etc. Show proper consideration for others' privacy and for topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory. Messages containing intentionally misleading information, defamatory content, threats, verbal abuse, harassment, obscenity or personal information about other individuals are not allowed.

3. **Be legal**
   Do not post anything in violation of copyright. Generally, don't post entire articles. Even if you attribute the article's source and author, posting an article written by someone else is a potential violation of copyright laws. It's also unnecessary and results in needlessly long forums. If you wish to reference a news article or online writing, post a summary of the material and a link to the complete source. If you're not sure, don't post it.

4. **No spam**
   Advertisements, chain letters, pyramid schemes and solicitations are unacceptable on the IBIS forums. The IBIS Team has sole discretion to determine whether or not a message contains a commercial solicitation. Spamming includes intentionally posting duplicate messages, posting meaningless (or extremely brief) messages or posting repetitive messages in multiple forums. Messages considered spam, trolling or flaming (as determined by the sole discretion of the IBIS Team) can be deleted without warning or explanation.

5. **Add value**
   Provide worthwhile information and perspective. For example, posts consisting entirely of the word "duh" do not add value.

6. **Identify yourself**
   You are welcome to use a nickname or a "handle" for yourself, but since these blogs and forums are work-related, your real name and information must be available to other members who are signed in. This information is included in your profile. You can see and edit your profile when you are signed-in by clicking your name near the top of the page.

7. **Don't forget your day job**
   The IBIS Blogs and Forums exist to support the work of the IBIS project. Off-topic discussions should be avoided. Make sure that use of blogs or forums does not interfere with your job or commitments to your customers and colleagues. Follow your agency's work rules and guidelines.

8. **These sites are monitored**
   Administrators and moderators have the right to delete, move, or close any inappropriate topic or posting at any time.

9. **New to blogs and forums?**
   The IBIS blogs and forums are here to supplement the work of the IBIS Project. We want interested people to participate and don't want the technology to get in the way. However, tech support is very limited. If you have a technical question, please read the FAQs. If you don't find an answer, send an e-mail to DOAIBIS@wisconsin.gov Someone will get back to you as soon as possible.

_____ End of IBIS Community Service Agreement